Becoming Educated

Since I was little, my mother would always tell me, “Kristin you will be a very successful person when you grow older if you work hard to get there.” I always thought *what does it mean to be successful?* As I grew older, I understood that my mom and dad never went to college and they were both working at jobs that they were lucky enough to get without a college degree. Now I know people aren’t always as lucky as my parents were with finding a job without a college education. I knew I needed to make my mother proud and become a successful and educated adult.

Being educated to me means getting a high education and becoming a successful person in the future. It means to be a leader and to make the most of every opportunity that comes your way. You should learn from your mistakes and learn as much information as you can daily. There have been times in my life where I feel I was greatly impacted and I became a more educated person because of it. Every experience throughout my life has been like adding a charm to a charm bracelet. The charm bracelet represents my education and how each charm indicates a more educated person.

One of my most memorable charms was from my high school graduation and the gold tassel I was awarded for receiving honors in high school. This tassel meant a lot to my family and me. I worked so hard throughout high school and I felt it was finally paying off with this gold tassel that I got to wear to my high school graduation. I remember the night I received my tassel like it was just yesterday.

It was a long day at school and I had a calc test in the morning and an English test in the afternoon. I was very stressed trying to study for both tests when all I wanted to do was hang out with my friends who were all seniors as well and never seemed to have tests. They say your senior year is a joke and you don’t have any real classes, but for me English and Calc was a full load. Before the test, I thought of that night and how it was the award ceremony and they would be awarding the honor students with gold tassels and robes, and I was on that list to receive them. I took both tests and I went home to get ready for a very exciting night. My mother bought me a new dress for the occasion, and my whole family was going to the ceremony to cheer me on when I was named as an honors student. This honor meant a lot to my family and me because I worked so hard to get there and I took honor classes and was involved in many extra-curricular activities which were only making this award so much more rewarding. My name was finally called to come up and receive my gold tassel and robes that would be worn at my high school graduation that was only a few weeks away. It was such a great achievement and my mother was so proud which just made me happier.

A couple weeks later it was time for graduation and my grades were all A’s and I was wearing my gold tassel. Wearing the gold tassel at graduation was a great accomplishment to me and my family. I saw my family in the audience smiling and clapping as my classmates and I walked across the stage to receive our diplomas. All the stress that tests caused was finally paying off as I crossed the stage. This was only the beginning of my successful career ahead.

The second charm on my bracelet was the little boy I encountered while observing at Cheston Elementary school. It was the end of my fall semester freshmen year when I realized being an education major was a lot of work. I had to fulfill 40 hours of observation hours in a diverse classroom in order to be accepted into the education program. I decided to start early and get my hours done during winter break, so I went to the Elementary School I attended, which was Bloomsbury Elementary School. I also went to Cheston Elementary school which was going to fulfill all my diversity requirements because it was a very diverse school. Cheston Elementary School was a small run down school in the middle of the “projects.” It was a bad area and a lot of violence occurred around the school. When I entered the school it was a different story, the teachers were so welcoming. I was greeted by the security guard who signs guest into the school. He was a very friendly man who was very helpful when I was trying to find the classroom I was observing. Teachers also said hello to me and asked me how I was doing as I walked down the hallway and they did not even know who I was. Ms. Gross was the first grade teacher I was observing and she was a very kind lady who actually graduated from Bloomsburg University. I knew I was in good hands because Bloomsburg is known for its education program and the great teachers it produces. The first couple days I just observed the students and they seemed like great kids that loved to learn. As I was observing, I came across one student who seemed to cause problems for Ms. Gross. He was always up running around the classroom and doing everything but his school work. I later found out that he had ADHD and that was why he was so energetic. I became fascinated by this little boy because I am concerned about how to deal with children with ADHD. I would observe from the back of the classroom and take note on how Ms. Gross would handle him, and for the most part she ignored him unless he got very rowdy.

This little boy would teach me an important lesson during my first experience participating in a classroom. I then began to participate in the classroom and one the first lessons that I helped teach was a lesson on words that rhymed. The children had two pieces of paper, one with a bunch of random words and another paper with 3 categories and the 1 word in each category. The children were to put the words that rhymed together in the columns. We worked on it as a class and most of the kids understood the concept and were breezing right through it others, in particular the little boy, were struggling. I went over to help the little boy and he had papers everywhere. I first told him to clear his desk and only have the two pieces of paper, scissors, and a glue stick on his desk. So he did that, and then he needed to catch up with the class, so I then pointed to a word and had him say it out loud and then think of what column it would go under. It was then the little boy said something to me that I still, to this day, cannot get out of my head. He said to me, “Miss Race, don’t even bother helping me I am too dumb and will never get this.” This shocked me and I didn’t even know how to respond to a first grader telling me he was too dumb to understand this. Of all people, a first grader should not be telling me that they are too dumb when they still have their whole life ahead of them and so much to learn and take advantage of.

This little boy has helped me realize why I want to be a teacher. I want to help children succeed in school and not think, at first grade, they are too dumb to do anything. I believe, that all children can be successful with the right influences and support from teachers and parents. I want to become a teacher so I can be that right influence and show students with hard work they can achieve anything they put their mind to.

In my future I see myself being a great and effective teacher. I see my little first grade students walking down the hallway with their lunchboxes in hand into my classroom, hanging their coats and getting out their homework from the night before to hand in. I see my classroom being decorated with displays of student’s work all over the classroom, and lots of books covering the walls for their free reading time. I also see little boys and girls like the little boy I encountered in college and I see them being very successful individuals with the right motivation by their peers and myself. In my classroom, I will not ignore the students that need help on assignments, and I will adjust and modify my lesson plans in order to feed the needs of all the individual students in the classroom. My last charm on my bracelet would have to be my future classroom and the great things that will be occurring in that classroom.

My charm bracelet consists of my successful moments and my life changing memories in my life that are always there to remind me of my past, present, and future and to help build the idea of what it means to me to be educated. My gold tassel charm may represent my accomplishments but it also represents the accomplishments I want my students to receive when their older. The charm for the little boy is to remind me every day with my own students that I must help my students who are like that little boy so they understand that they are successful and they can make something out of their lives, and no one is dumb. Though I only have the children for one year I know one year can greatly impact a child and the future they set for themselves. I will tell each of my students, “You will be a very successful person when you grow older if you work hard to get there.”